



VirginiaGreenTravel.org

# 2013 Virginia Green Travel Star Awards Green Travel Star



## *Green Hotel of the Year*

THE WESTIN  
RICHMOND

### The Westin Richmond

We, at the Westin Richmond believe that economic growth and the well-being of society are inextricably tied to the health of the environment. Accordingly, we embrace our responsibility for environmental stewardship and are committed to integrating leading environmental practices and sustainability principles into our core business strategy. As such, we have also been recognized and awarded a designation of a “green hotel” by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

Through collaboration with our hotel associates, suppliers and business partners, we will actively work to reduce the environmental impact of our business activities and to continually improve and innovate on practices aimed at:

- Conserving natural resources
- Minimizing waste and pollution
- Enhancing indoor environmental quality
- Establishing and reporting on key environmental performance indicators, and
- Raising environmental awareness among our associates, guests, and communities

We acknowledge that, in many ways, we, like the global community we serve, are only in the early stages of developing and implementing the many changes that will be necessary to achieve these vital goals. Nonetheless, we strongly believe that our efforts to support a healthy environment serve the interests of both current and future generations and constitute the foundation of enduring success.

Below are some of the initiatives we have implemented on our part:

**Green Meetings and Events:** In an effort to reduce waste and resources, we have implemented a clutter free meeting environment where as pads and pens are provided on an “as needed” basis. We also place pitchers of water versus using bottles for business meetings; reducing the use of plastics and waste.

- The Westin Richmond also offers “linen free” meetings where as our banquets tables are finished with a look that is suitable to use without linens which conserves energy and eliminated chemicals used in cleaning banquet linens.
- The Westin Richmond strives to use locally grown produce and products to do our part to reduce our carbon footprint by eliminating emissions and fossil fuels consumed in the transportation and preservation processes involved with use of the same products obtained outside of the region.
- Since 2010, The Westin Richmond has tracked various energy and waste consumption volumes in an effort to directly track our carbon footprint. We are thus able to provide upon request, a meeting impact report that is generated specifically for a particular meeting or event showering the sustainability impact that has been incurred and the relative sustainability savings as a result of holding the meeting or event at The Westin Richmond
- **Make a Green Choice:** Conserving water, energy and other resources is great for our guests and the environment. This program allows our guests to decline housekeeping services in exchange for a \$5 food and beverage credit per day or 500 SPG bonus points per day when housekeeping is declined (except day of departure). Each room saved can conserve up to 49.2 gallons of water, 0.19 KWH of electricity, 25,000 Btu of natural gas and 7oz of chemicals.

**High Efficiency Lighting:** Lighting accounts for 15-25% of electricity consumption in hotels. Using higher efficiency lamps, such as compact fluorescent lamp bulbs (CFLs), directly reduces this consumption and the associated emissions, and also reduces air conditioning loads as they do not produce as much heat as traditional incandescent lamps.

**Low-flow Showerheads:** Water usage in showers comprises a significant portion of overall consumption in hotels. In addition to saving water, low-flow showerheads reduce the energy demand needed for hot water heating and minimize the volume of water that requires chemical wastewater treatment. While utilizing The Heavenly Shower Head, we have a flow preventer switch that allows our guests to run off one of the two heads, thus conserving water. Signage is prevalent in each bath/shower explaining the options to conserve water while showering.

**Irrigation Standard Operating Practices:** An estimated 50% of irrigation water is wasted because of evaporation, wind, over-watering, overlapped coverage, and improper system design, installation or maintenance. Optimizing irrigation systems to supply the minimum amount of water necessary offers a significant conservation opportunity. We utilize our irrigation in the early morning hours to reduce evaporation as well as using a rain sensor to eliminate watering when there has been rainfall.

**Preventive Maintenance:** Preventative Maintenance (PM) is essential to ensuring that equipment and systems perform their intended function reliably and efficiently, thereby promoting energy and water conservation. PM also lengthens the life of equipment and components, delaying the need for replacement and thereby deferring the environmental impact and resource consumption associated with the manufacturer of those systems. We have a Preventative Maintenance plan in place for all of our mechanical areas of the hotel to ensure our equipment is running at peak performance.

**Dumpster Monitoring:** Dumpster monitoring involves the use of sensors to detect the fullness of trash compactors and thereby limits waste hauls (pick-ups) when the dumpster is full. This technology reduces the carbon emissions associated with unnecessary hauling trips.

-The Westin Richmond has partnered with local recyclers to arrange for regular pick-up and appropriate disposal of cardboard boxes and wooden pallets to have them recycled versus discarded as waste

**Recyclable Fryer Oil:** We are involved in a program where we are able to recycle our kitchen fryer oil with a partner company. Each time our oil is changed, we have a special container where it is placed and a partner company comes to pick it up monthly after which it is recycled and used to make other products.

**Electronic Sales Tools:** The traditional meeting planning process requires the use of tremendous amount of paper. By utilizing electronic sales products, we can significantly reduce paper usage in the meeting planning process and encourage the use of web and email based business conduct. We are also proud to share our banquet and catering menus via an interactive web menu versus the customary large packets of printed materials.

**E-Folio:** While providing a service to increase guest satisfaction and expedite check-out, we are reducing paper waste by offering guests an electronic folio versus receiving a printed copy under their guestroom door.

**Energy-Efficient Digital Signage:** Utilizing energy-efficient signage lowers energy consumption compared to traditional digital signage and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

**Guestroom linen conservation:** In an effort to preserve our environment by reducing chlorine and detergent use, as well as saving countless gallons of water daily, our overnight guests are given the option to not have their guestroom linen and terry laundered and replaced daily during their stay.

**Lobby and Guestroom Recycling:** We actively promote good recycling habits of waste throughout the hotel. All 250 guestrooms have a separate recycling container in each guestroom. We also have multiple recycling containers throughout our meeting space and lobby area.

**Recycled Planter Rocks:** Our rocks in all of our lobby planters are made out of recycled milk cartons, thus allowing true rocks to remain in nature and doing our part to use recycled products.

**Printer Toners and Office Supplies:** We have partnered with a vendor to pick up our old printer toners so they can be recycled rather than disposing of them. We have also made an effort to purchase recycled paper and other sustainable office supplies whenever possible through our office supply vendor.

**Lobby Atmosphere:** Lighting accounts for 15-25% of electricity consumption in hotels. In the evenings, we dim (and turn off some of) our lobby areas and restaurant lights and light candles in their place. This not only saves on electricity consumption, but also provides for a warm, welcoming atmosphere.

**Air Conditioning & Heat Conservation:** In order to reduce our electricity usage, we have placed our lobby meeting rooms on a night time setting where as the power consumption is automatically reduced at night when the space is not utilized.

**Exterior Lighting:** In an effort to reduce electricity usage, we have placed our exterior lighting on sensors so that they are only on when needed, versus a set time of day, thus reducing electrical waste.

**Chiller Energy Conservation:** Our hotel chiller is based on a 16 compressor system so that it only uses the energy needed to maintain a core temperature versus running at full load at all times, thus conserving energy and power

Visit The Westin Richmond's Virginia Green profile at:

<http://www.virginia.org/Listings/PlacesToStay/TheWestinRichmond/>

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